

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 069224
ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

66011

DRAFETED BY: S/S-O TGMARTIN

APPROVED BY: S/S-O TGMARTIN

-----024051 171158Z /11

O 171127Z MAR 78 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 069224

NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT DAMASCUS 1500 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO WHITE
HOUSE MAR 16.

QUOTE S E C R E T DAMASCUS 1500

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, SY, IS, LE

SUBJ: APPROACH TO SYRIA ON SOUTH LEBANON

SUMMARY: AS FIGHTING DIES DOWN IN SOUTH LEBANON THE SYRIANS
WILL FOCUS ON SEEKING RESTORATION OF LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY.
IF BROAD LINES OF SOLUTION IN SOUTH LEBANON PARALLEL THOSE
OF SHTAURA AGREEMENT, WE BELIEVE SYRIA WILL BE BETTER

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 069224

DISPOSED TO HELP IN IMPLEMENTATION. SYRIANS WILL
PROBABLY FIND PROPOSAL FOR UN BUFFER FORCE UNATTRACTIVE.
BEST OPENING MOVE WOULD BE UNEQUIVOCAL ISRAELI COMMITMENT
TO LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY COUPLED WITH IMMEDIATE INSERTION OF
LEBANESE REGULAR FOCES IN ONE WEDGE, HOWEVER SMALL, OF
ISRAELI-LEBANESE BORDER. IT WILL BE DESIRABLE TO SHARE OUR
THINKING WITH SYRIANS ON POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS BEFORE BEGIN

GOES TO WASHINGTON AND ASSAD DEPARTS FOR OFFICIAL VISIT TO INDIA. END SUMMARY.

1. IN THE WAKE OF ISRAEL'S ATTACK IN SOUTH LEBANON THE IMMEDIATE PRESSURE SYRIA FACES, COMING FROM ARAB WORLD RADICALS AS WELL AS SYRIA'S OWN PAST POLICY AND INTERNAL IMPRECATIVES, IS TO SUPPORT THE PALESTINIANS. UNTIL ATTENTION IS DEFLECTED FROM THE ISRAELI ATTACK ON PALESTINIANS, WE CAN EXPECT THE SYRIANS TO SUPPORT PALESTINIANS POLITICALLY AND THROUGH MILITARY RESUPPLY, EVEN AT THE RISK OF ISRAELI COUNTERACTION AND ESCALATION. THIS IS THE MINIMUM THE SYRIANS CAN DO RIGHT NOW TO RETAIN CREDIBILITY AMONG THE PALESTINIANS AND IN THE ARAB WORLD.

2. SYRIA'S PUBLIC COMMITMENT IN THE LEBANON CONTEXT, HOWEVER, IS NOT THE PALESTINIAN BUT TO LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY. THE SHTAURA AGREEMENT WAS IN ORIGIN A PLO IDEA AND IN EFFECT REPRESENTED ACCEPTANCE THAT LEBANESE SOVEREIGNTY TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER THOSE RADICAL ELEMENTS INSISTING ON FEDAYEEN PRESENCE ALONG THE BORDER. THUS, AS THE FIGHTING DIES DOWN THE FOCUS WILL CHANGE TO SECURING ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANESE TERRITORY. WE BELIEVE THE SYRIANS CAN BE BROUGHT TO SUPPORT A NEGOTIATED SOLUTION PARTICULARLY IF ITS BROAD LINES PARALLEL THOSE OF THE SHTAURA AGREEMENT, ALBEIT WITH A MORE COMMANDING ISRAELI ROLE. THE ISRAELIS IN EFFECT HAVE ALREADY HALF IMPLEMENTED SHTAURA AGREEMENT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 069224

(PALESTINIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM A TEN KM ZONE), AND HAVE PROMISED TO IMPLEMENT THE SECOND HALF BY TURNING THE AREA OVER TO LEBANESE FORCES WHEN THEY ARE CAPABLE OF ENSURING SECURITY.

3. DEPARTMENT IS STUDYING A TEMPORARY UN FORCE FOR THE SOUTH. THIS APPROACH COULD CAUSE AT LEAST AS MANY PROBLEMS FOR THE SYRIANS AS WOULD PROLONGED ISRAELI OCCUPATION. WHEN IDEA OF UN FORCES FOR SOUTH LEBANON WAS DISCUSSED LAST MARCH IT WAS MET BY LUKEWARM RESPONSE FROM ALL QUARTERS. SYRIANS, FOR THEIR PART, CANNOT NOW ANYMORE THAN LAST YEAR AGREE TO A UN FORCE MANDATE WHICH THEY WOULD SUSPECT WOULD END UP PROHIBITING PALESTINIAN ACTION AGAINST ISRAEL, BUT GIVING ISRAELIS CARTE BLANCHE ON "GOOD FENCES" AND POLICE ACTIONS. SYRIANS COULD DO THEIR BEST TO SEE THAT LEBANESE AND PARTICULARLY SOVIETS SHARED THEIR OBJECTIONS. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT SYRIANS WOULD OPPOSE ANY UN MANDATE THAT COULD BE DEvised BUT WE ARE INCLINED BELIEVE THE DIFFICULTIES MAY PROVE INSURMOUNTABLE.

4. SYRIANS WOULD FIND IT MORE DIFFICULT TO OPPOSE A CLEAR ISRAELI COMMITMENT TO TOTAL WITHDRAWAL WHICH

BEGAN IMMEDIATELY REPLACING ISRAELIS WITH WHATEVER ARMY FORCE
THE LEBANESE CAN MUSTER TO TAKE OVER A SMALL WEDGE OF THE
ISRAELI OCCUPIED TURF. TIMING OF SUBSEQUENT WITHDRAWALS
WOULD DEPEND ON LEBANESE SPEED IN REBUILDING THEIR ARMY AND KEEPING
AREAS ALREADY UNDER THEIR CONTROL FREE OF PALESTINIAN
FEDAYEEN. UNDER THESE CONDITIONS, STIMULUS TO LEBANESE
AND SYRIANS FOR REBUILDING LEBANON'S ARMY WOULD BE COMPELLING
UNLIKE SITUATION OF PAST SEVERAL WEEKS IN LEBANON.
IN ADDITION, OUR SPONSORING SUCH A MOVE WOULD CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE
US SUPPORT FOR LEBANESE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY.

5. THE SYRIANS CAN PROBABLY UNDERCUT ANY MOVE WITH
WHICH THEY STRONGLY DISAGREE TO SOLVE THE PRESENT PROBLEM.
CONVERSELY, THEIR SUPPORT WILL BE IMPORTANT TO SECURING
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 069224

PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE AGREEMENT TO ANY SOLUTION. THUS,
WE SHOULD TRY TO GET THEM ON BOARD OR AT MINIMUM SECURE
THEIR ACQUIESCENCE IN ANY COURSE OF ACTION WE DECIDE ON.
FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF GETTING BEST RECEPTION FROM
SYRIANS IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF OUR APPROACH DOES NOT APPEAR
TO BE COOKED UP WITH ISRAELIS, AN ALMOSE UNAVOIDABLE
CONSLUSION HYA IF WE COME TO THE SYRIANS AFTER CONSULTING
BEGIN IN WASHINGTON. WOULD ALSO NOTE PRESIDENT ASSAD AND
FONMIN KHADDAM ARE STILL SCHEDULED TO TAKE OFF FOR INDIA
ON MARCH 21. I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE OUR THINKING ON THE
BEST APPROACH WELL BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE.
MURPHY UNQUOTE VANCE

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, PALESTINIANS, INTERVENTION, CAT-B, COMBAT OPERATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE069224
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: REPEAT OF DAMASCUS 1500
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: N780003-0533
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780353/aaaabstj.tel
Line Count: 148
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d6abffc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3287187
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APPROACH TO SYRIA ON SOUTH LEBANON SUMMARY: AS FIGHTING DIES DOWN IN SOUTH LEBANON THE SYRIANS WILL FOCUS ON SEEKING RESTORATION OF LEBANESE SOVE
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, PBOR, SY, IS, LE
To: AMMAN BEIRUT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d6abffc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014